News from the Wyoming Department of Health

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Wyoming Newborn Screening to Be Expanded

Babies born in Wyoming after July 1 will be screened for 28 serious medical conditions as the Wyoming Department of Health strengthens the state's newborn metabolic screening panel.

"We hope to protect more Wyoming babies by expanding this important newborn screening from seven conditions to covering 28," said Dorothy Ailes, manager of the Metabolic Screening Program. "If we can identify infants who may be threatened, they can be helped with early treatment. Most children with problems detected by newborn screening do not have a family history of genetic or metabolic disorders, and often seem healthy at birth."

"Wyoming started blood testing for seven diseases in 1978, and since then we've been able to assist a number of Wyoming children. Medical advances mean there are more conditions we can screen for now, as well as more potential treatments that can make a difference should one of the conditions be diagnosed," Ailes continued.

Under Wyoming law, newborns are initially screened between 24-48 hours after birth unless parents sign a waiver opting out of the program. The test involves a few drops of blood taken from babies' heels. It is also highly recommended that a second screen be done at the first baby checkup, which is about seven to 10 days after birth.

"Many of these diseases are quite rare, but they can be absolutely devastating," Ailes said. With the screening expansion, Ailes noted the state is following recommendations from national medical organizations.

For more information or to request a brochure about Wyoming's Metabolic Screening Program, please call 307-777-7941.

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